

molecule and having a viscosity in the range from 250 to 11,000 mPa·s, and at least one reactive diluent, to a target substrate to form a wet coating and

curing said wet coating by exposure to ultraviolet radiation under an inert gas atmosphere.

2. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said UV-curable coating composition further comprises at least one reactive diluent R selected from the group consisting of difunctional esters of acrylic acid, difunctional esters of methacrylic acid, polyfunctional esters of methacrylic acid, polyfunctional esters of acrylic acid with acrylic acid, diols, polyols and mixtures thereof.

3. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein, based on an overall weight of the coating composition, excluding pigments and fillers, the coating composition comprises:

5 - 90% by weight of at least one aliphatic urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU;

10 - 95% by weight of at least one reactive diluent R;

0.1 - 5% by weight of at least one photoinitiator;

optionally 0 - 20% by weight of one or more further reactive diluents, and

optionally 0 - 15% by weight, of one or more additives.

4. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU has a number-average molecular weight in the range from 500 to 5000.

5. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU has a double bond equivalent weight in the range from 250 to 2000.

6. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU is obtained by successive reaction of at least 25% of one or more isocyanate groups of a compound (component A) containing one or more isocyanate groups with at least one hydroxyalkyl ester of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, or a mixture thereof (component B) and of any remaining free isocyanate groups with at least one further compound (component C) having at least one functional group which is reactive toward isocyanate groups.

7. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein component A is a prepolymer which contains a plurality of isocyanate groups and has at least two isocyanate groups per molecule, component A obtained by reacting at least one low molecular mass aliphatic diisocyanate or polyisocyanate with a compound having at least two isocyanate-reactive functional groups, a ratio of isocyanate groups to functional groups [being] in the range of from 3:1 to 1:2.

8. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the one or more isocyanate groups of component A have been reacted in a stoichiometric ratio with one or more hydroxyl groups of component B.

9. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein at least a portion of the free isocyanate groups of the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU have been reacted with one or more molecules which contain an isocyanate-reactive group and a hydrophilic, stabilizing group.

10. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 6, wherein at least a portion of the free isocyanate groups of the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU have been reacted with hydroxyalkyl esters of aliphatic dicarboxylic acids, alkylamine amides of aliphatic dicarboxylic acids or mixtures thereof, having at least 6 carbon atoms.

11. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating composition comprises from 2 to 40% by weight of one or more pigments, based on the overall weight of the coating composition.

12. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating composition contains from 1 to 30% by weight of one or more fillers, based on the overall weight of the coating composition.

13. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the scratch-resistant coating is obtained by a multicoat coating process, said multicoat coating process comprising the following steps:

- i. applying a basecoat material to a substrate surface;
- ii. drying and/or crosslinking the basecoat film;
- iii. applying a topcoat material obtained by the process as claimed in claim 1;
- iv. curing said topcoat material by exposure to UV light under an inert gas atmosphere.

14. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the target substrate has a metallic surface.

Please add the following new claims.

15. (New) The process as claimed in claim 3, wherein the coating compositions comprises from 2 to 9% by weight of one or more additives.

16. (New) The process as claimed in claim 5, wherein the urethane (meth)acrylate prepolymer PU has a double bond equivalent weight in the range from 300 to 900 daltons.

17. (New) The process as claimed in claim 13, wherein the base coat material is pigmented.

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